

Houston's home and social gatherings and always returned. She also quietly helped countless other individuals, helping families with furniture, clothes, or even mortgage payments.

We were all enriched by her life and devastated by her passing, and the void in our community will never be filled.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in commemorating the life and contributions of Mrs. Jackie Lee Houston, who passed away on September 14, 2011. Her legacy will live on through her many achievements, the countless lives she touched, and the enduring admiration and devotion of her loving husband, Jim. May God bless her, and God bless America.

PALESTINIAN STATEHOOD

HON. STEVE AUSTRIA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 23, 2011

Mr. AUSTRIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deep concern about today's vote in the U.N. General Assembly regarding Palestinian statehood.

This unilateral attempt by the Palestinians is not in the best interest of the United States. It is not in the best interest of Israel—our closest ally in the Middle East. And, in my opinion, it is not in the best interest of the Palestinian people. Any decisions regarding Palestine's statehood must come in conjunction with security for the Israeli people and multilateral talks with Israel.

Today, as the world watches the actions of the United Nations, I plant my feet firmly on the side of the Jewish State of Israel, and express my unwavering support for their country and security.

Israel stands as a beacon of hope in a region of the world where democracy and freedom are in short supply. With our continued friendship, we can ensure that Israel has the support and resources needed to continue on as a banner of freedom and democracy in the Middle East.

SUPPORT ISRAEL

HON. DAVID G. REICHERT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 23, 2011

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Israel and in my belief that a nuclear-armed Iran poses a dire threat not only to Israel, but to the entire world.

Israel is a crucial ally and friend to the United States. There is a long, rich, and productive history between our two countries. If Israel's sovereignty and ability to compete on a level playing field is being threatened, it is important for all levels of the U.S. Government to stand up and act. The partnership between our two democracies is strong and must remain so.

Palestinian leadership is attempting a push toward statehood through the United Nations but Middle East peace can only be achieved through direct negotiations. An agreement suitable to both Israelis and Palestinians must achieve real security and mutual recognition of each state's right to exist. That cannot be achieved through unilateral action.

As unrest continues in the Middle East, the United States must remain steadfast in its unyielding support of our friend and ally. Sadly, Israel is in a volatile region of the world where our shared values of self-determination and democracy are under constant attack. That is why I continually support vital security assistance to Israel and support legislation to impose sanctions on those aiding Iran's nuclear program. Iran's Mahmoud Ahmadinejad can never, at any time, be allowed to obtain nuclear weapons.

Israel's security, and regional stability in the Middle East, is a vital U.S. interest. As a Member of Congress, I urge all branches of U.S. Government to remain consistent in emphasizing their support for Israel.

IN HONOR OF JUDGE AARON COHN

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 23, 2011

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to our Nation's longest serving juvenile court judge and one of Columbus, Georgia's most distinguished legal minds, celebrated military veterans and dedicated public servants, Judge Aaron Cohn. Judge Cohn, who has served as a juvenile court judge since 1965, will step down from that position at the end of this month. His longevity of dedicated judicial service and steadfast commitment to positively influencing generations of Columbus-area youth, are just a few of the many reasons as to why Judge Cohn has been an invaluable and irreplaceable pillar in Georgia's legal community.

A Columbus native, Judge Cohn was born on March 3, 1916. He is a graduate of Columbus High School and the University of Georgia. As a student at the University of Georgia, he epitomized the true meaning of scholar-athlete in that he was the Captain of the Bulldogs' tennis team, served as Vice President of the Inter-fraternity Council and was a member of the Blue Key Honorary Society.

Following his exemplary collegiate career, Judge Cohn was admitted to the Georgia Bar in 1938 and in 1940 he volunteered for the United States Army. He served under General George Patton in World War II and earned the Bronze Star for his patriotic service on behalf of our great Nation. As a Major in the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, he bravely fought with U.S. armed forces across France and broke through German defenses at Metz.

One of the most defining and heroic moments of Judge Cohn's illustrious military career occurred when as a young commanding officer in the U.S. Army, he was among the first of the Allied troops to help liberate the Nazi Concentration Camp in Ebensee, Austria. Almost 40 years later in 1982, he was honored by the United States Holocaust Memorial Commission as an Official Liberator of the Concentration Camp at Ebensee, Austria. Additionally, he was cited by the City of Bettembourg, Luxembourg, for his service in the liberation of Luxembourg while with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment.

After the war, Judge Cohn diligently focused his efforts on working to prevent children from taking the wrong path, advocating civil rights and promoting religious tolerance. During the

initial years following his return from Europe, he worked as a successful lawyer and served as chief registrar for Muscogee County, Georgia where he was active in the desegregation of the voter registration process. When he became a juvenile court judge in 1965, his love of children and his determination to help the underprivileged led him to embark on a highly successful and rewarding judicial career.

A recent headline in the Columbus Ledger-Enquirer recently read "Judge Cohn is an icon of integrity." It is true that Judge Cohn is an icon of integrity but he is also so much more. His notable judicial feats and vast accomplishments are an accumulation of tangibly substantive deeds that have positively impacted the lives of countless families around the world.

I would be remiss if I did not also recognize the important role that Judge Cohn's late wife, Janet Ann, played in his numerous achievements by being a supportive spouse, close confidant and loving mother to their three children: Gail Cohn, Leslie L. Cohn and Jane Cohn Kulbersh.

Finally, Judge Cohn has been a pillar of integrity throughout his life. He has been a mentor for me and countless others; an adviser; role model and friend.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting a true American hero, outstanding legal scholar and one of Columbus, Georgia's most beloved figures, Judge Aaron Cohn, on the occasion of his well-deserved retirement.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 23, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today our national debt is \$14,726,790,407,953.74.

On January 6, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$4,088,364,661,659.94 since then. This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

MOTION TO CONCUR

SPEECH OF

HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide explanation and clarification of the intended budget effects from the anomaly related to the U.S. Postal Service that is contained in H.J. Res 79, the Continuing Resolution (CR) for Fiscal Year 2012.

H.J. Res. 79 would postpone from September 30, 2011 until November 18, 2011 the payment due from the Postal Service, which is off-budget, to an on-budget account managed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006 requires the Postal Service to

make a \$5.5 billion payment to OPM by September 30, 2011 to pre-fund retiree health benefits. However, the Postal Service does not currently have adequate funds to make this payment. To address this issue, the CR includes a provision that will delay the payment to provide time for the Postal Service to work with Congress and the Administration to develop a long-term solution.

If only the on-budget effects were counted, this delay would score as an increase in spending in 2011, but then produce savings in 2012, resulting in additional room for spending under the caps on discretionary spending established in the Budget Control Act of 2011. To prevent this unintended consequence, the House Budget Committee scored this anomaly on a unified basis, so that both the on-budget and off-budget effects were counted together. As a result, the 2011 cost and the 2012 savings offset each other and produce a score of zero in the CR. This decision has precedent. A similar provision was included in the FY 2010 short-term CR (P.L. 111-68) where the House scored that provision on a unified basis pursuant to section 426(b) of the 2010 budget resolution.

The off-budget status of the U.S. Postal Service creates significant complications for budget enforcement when the agency seeks timing shifts or bailouts from the U.S. Treasury due to financial distress. The House Budget Committee will continue to monitor this anomaly throughout the budget and appropriations process to ensure that it does not result in additional discretionary spending in FY 2012.

HONORING CONGRESSWOMAN
CARRIE MEEK

HON. TIM RYAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 23, 2011

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to recognize Congresswoman Carrie Meek and her lifelong devotion to public service.

For over a decade, Congresswoman Meek served in the Florida State House of Representatives and Senate. In 1993, Congresswoman Meek became the first African American since Reconstruction to be elected to the United States House of Representatives from the state of Florida.

Congresswoman Meek fought against cuts to social welfare programs throughout the 1990s. Instead, she worked to expand federal programs that could create jobs and make it easier for minorities to open and own their own businesses.

During her career, she worked tirelessly to stand up for the underprivileged; making sure that the elderly were able to live comfortably, that minorities were accurately counted in the Census, and that disaster stricken areas had adequate funding.

I am honored to join my distinguished colleagues to pay tribute to the great work and achievements of Congresswoman Meek. She is, and always will be a shining example of how we, as Members of Congress, should conduct ourselves in public office.

PALESTINIAN STATEHOOD

HON. JAMES A. HIMES

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 23, 2011

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, today, we expect that Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas will apply for member status before the United Nations. This unilateral action is likely to complicate U.S. peace efforts. It also rejects the essential principle of solving the conflict through direct negotiations with Israel.

History has taught us that a just and lasting peace must be negotiated. It cannot be imposed from the outside, lest it be built on an unstable and temporary foundation.

The creation of a viable, autonomous and peaceful Palestinian state is essential, not only to address the aspirations of the Palestinian people, but also to ensure Israel's security in the region. A two-state solution is the only answer for sustainable peace, and while the negotiations to achieve that goal have suffered setbacks, that must be the objective.

During a speech on Middle East policy at the U.S. State Department on May 19, 2011, President Obama stated, "For the Palestinians, efforts to delegitimize Israel will end in failure. Symbolic actions to isolate Israel at the United Nations in September won't create an independent state. Palestinian leaders will not achieve peace or prosperity if Hamas insists on a path of terror and rejection. And Palestinians will never realize their independence by denying the right of Israel to exist." I agree with these sentiments.

HUMANITARIAN CRISIS AND
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN
SUDAN

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 23, 2011

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to my colleagues' attention a powerful hearing that the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission—of which I am a co-chair—held on September 22, 2011 to discuss the humanitarian atrocities that are taking place in Sudan, including Darfur.

I submit for the record the moving testimonies of two of the panelists—former member of Congress, the Honorable Thomas H. Andrews, and Ms. Jehanne Henry of Human Rights Watch. I hope that my colleagues will take a moment to read these testimonies and realize that the atrocities mentioned are taking place and continue to take place today.

The United States must not turn a blind eye to this part of the world.

[Human Rights Watch, Sept. 22, 2011]

TESTIMONY TO THE TOM LANTOS HUMAN
RIGHTS COMMISSION REGARDING SUDAN

(By Jehanne Henry)

Good morning, Chairman McGovern, Chairman Wolf and distinguished Members of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission. Thank you for inviting me to this important hearing on Sudan, particularly in view of new conflict and human rights abuses occurring in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states as we speak.

I was asked to speak on my recent visit to Southern Kordofan. I will keep my comments brief and ask that our August 30 report on the situation in Southern Kordofan be submitted for the record.

As you are aware, South Sudan seceded from Sudan on July 9, following a January referendum under the terms of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement. While these events transpired relatively smoothly, new conflicts erupted in key areas north of the border, where the reforms envisioned in the peace agreement never occurred.

Weeks after Sudan militarily overtook the disputed border area of Abyei in late May, in violation of the CPA, fighting between government and SPLA forces broke out in neighboring Southern Kordofan, home to large ethnic Nuba populations with longstanding ties to the SPLM.

The fighting broke out amid growing tensions over disputed state elections, in which Ahmed Haroun—who is wanted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur—claimed a narrow victory for governor. The two parties also disagreed over the terms of troop withdrawals under the security arrangements in the CPA.

According to witnesses we interviewed and other sources, government forces shelled civilian areas, shot people in the streets and carried out house-to-house searches and arrests based on lists of names of known SPLM supporters in the first weeks of fighting. Many people I interviewed saw dead bodies and evidence of looting and burning as they escaped the town.

The witness accounts are consistent with many of the findings in an August 15 report by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which documents unlawful killings and attacks on civilians and other serious human rights violations that could amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

In late August, I visited Southern Kordofan. Although government restrictions prevented us from visiting Kadugli itself and other government-controlled areas, we visited many towns and villages deep in the Nuba Mountains, where hundreds of thousands of people have taken refuge from fighting and ongoing indiscriminate bombing by the Sudanese government.

While I was there, I saw government planes circling overhead on a near-daily basis, sometimes multiple times per day. I also saw three bombs falling out of an aircraft, and heard them explode a few kilometers away. We investigated 13 air separate strikes in Kauda, Delami, and Kurchi areas—a small fraction of the total number of air strikes in Nuba Mountains—in which bomb fragments brutally killed at least 26 people, including women and children, and injured 45 others, maiming many for life.

According to those we interviewed, there were no military targets in areas where bombs fell. None of the incidents we investigated occurred close to front lines or in areas of active combat. The type of munitions used and the manner in which they were delivered—unguided, dropped from high altitudes—are further evidence that the bombings were indiscriminate and therefore unlawful.

The bombing is ongoing, and has a devastating impact on the Nuba population. People forced out of their homes now live in harsh conditions under boulders, in caves, on mountaintops, under trees, and in the bush far from towns where they fear being struck by bombs. They lacked sufficient food, medicine, and shelter from the rains—many are now eating berries and leaves, and their children are suffering from diarrhea and malaria. Many we met were separated from